

**Mayor Anthony A. Williams
Ritz-Carlton Georgetown Grand Opening**

**Ritz- Carlton Georgetown
Tuesday, April 08, 2003**

The poet William Blake defined the world in terms of its opposites—to know something, you must know its contrary.

It seems to me that Blake's metaphor is the looking glass by which we should see this Ritz-Carlton: Reflecting on this building's first life to see how it has been reborn.

In its first life, this brick hall was an incinerator, a disposal, the final resting place for the waste of industry. Today, this building is an engine – a house themed by fire – that, I believe, can help fuel our economy.

Adding to the economy

In a time where America's workers are wedged between financial stability and fiscal fear, this hotel has created 150 new jobs—50 of which are filled by our residents.

In a city where people wonder about safety, this hotel is full of guests. And it's been that way since a week after the war.

And in a country where some leaders whisper about the need to slow spending, these companies – Marriott and Ritz-Carlton – have opened a \$150 million project in the District.

Building as a Symbol

To me, that chimney is a symbol. To me, the fire in this building's belly says that – while our thoughts are with our soldiers and their families – the District is open for business. There's more than \$27 million in development across our city. We're ranked first in national and international real-estate investment. We've opened a new convention center. And our hotel occupancy outpaces the national average.

Conclusion

We all know that we're one of the most prepared cities in the country. The security measures we see throughout the District are not the symptoms of a city that is unsafe—they are signs of a city working to stay secure.

And we all know that you cannot do business without dealing with Washington, D.C.—and cannot know this country without experiencing Washington, D.C.

As business and leisure travelers come, and locals look for new places to congregate, I hope they'll stay and eat in our new engine, our newest neighbor, the Ritz-Carlton Georgetown. Welcome to town.

- **Mayor Williams Comments on District's Economy**
Fundamentals remain strong, but the city has a plan for potential changes in the market.